

BUSINESS



Ned Oliver

Mat Hauck puts half-baked biscotti onto a rack to cool.

Biscotti Babies is born, thrives

Local baker switches to wholesale, concentrates on healthy biscotti

By Ned Oliver

GREAT BARRINGTON—When local baker Mat Hauck decided to get out of the retail business and start wholesaling his products to stores around the country, it didn't take him long to figure out what his specialty was going to be.

"It was literally just an ah-ha moment," Hauck said, describing the brainstorming process that led to the creation of his Biscotti Babies.

"When I ran my bakery, people were asking to buy the bite-sized samples of my biscotti instead of the whole cookie, I thought, why not? That's what the customer is looking for."

And so Biscotti Babies were born.

The cookies, bite-sized chunks of all natural whole-wheat biscotti, are available in four different flavors from cranberry walnut to orange almond.

Hauck said the response to his sweet little biscotti squares, baked on South Main Street in Great Barrington, has been great.

Hauck launched the brand a little more than a year ago and already Biscotti Babies

are sold in stores from Wholefoods across the mid-Atlantic region to the Berkshire Co-op.

Hauck got his start in the baking business by accident seven years ago, making biscotti for bake-sales at his daughter's school.

He said it wasn't long until fellow parents started calling him asking if they could buy more.

To meet demand for his products, Hauck started baking at the SoCo Creamery factory.

In 2005, Hauck opened his bakery, Edible Adventures, in West Stockbridge where he branched out from biscotti, selling everything from cupcakes and croissants to cookies and cakes.

Hauck closed the bakery in 2008 because he wasn't able to renew the lease.

Hauck said he looked around at other possible locations for Edible Adventures, but was also considering going into the wholesale business.

When he couldn't find a suitable place to relocate his building, he started trying to figure out what unique product he could wholesale, and in the process came full circle

back to biscotti.

Hauck handles all the baking while Wendy, his wife of 20 years, designed the packaging and marketing materials.

She also handles sales, delivery, and "everything else besides baking," in her words. Right now, Hauck is producing about 1,200 packages of the cookies a week and his products are sold in about 200 stores along the East Coast.

He said he's already expanding his product line, and just delivered his first case of gluten free cookies, dubbed "Yummy Cookies," to the Berkshire Coop last week.

But for now, the Biscotti Babies are the mainstay of his product line.

Hauck said that, in addition to being drawn to the size of his biscotti (traditional biscotti can be a little on the large and unwieldy side of things, he said) people like the taste.

Hauck said the flavor is distinct because his biscotti is the only he knows of that is whole wheat based, lending it a richer flavor, and, perhaps, making it better for you.

"It's healthier, but it's still a cookie," Hauck said.